

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Moultonborough Grange Hall added to State Register of Historic Places**

The Moultonborough Grange hall is one of six properties added to the New Hampshire State Register of Historic Places, as announced on November 26<sup>th</sup> in a joint release by the NH Division of Historical Resources and the NH Department of Cultural Resources.

The Moultonborough Grange building, located centrally in Moultonborough Village, is significant both for its architecture and for its social history in the community. In 1894, the newly incorporated Moultonborough Grange #197 purchased the property, a former tavern, and made extensive renovations to it during the next decade. By 1903, the building was transformed into a Grange hall with characteristic features, including the large auditorium with raised performance stage upstairs. The property retains a high level of integrity, and evokes the heyday of the Grange movement in the early 1900s.

Since the critically unstable structural condition of the Grange hall was discovered in June 2012, the Moultonborough Heritage Commission and the Moultonborough Historical Society, owner of the property since 2006, have partnered to take steps to save this landmark building and to plan for its future in Moultonborough Village. During the Plan NH 'Moultonborough Community Charrette' event held in July 2012, the Grange hall was discussed as one of a number of vacant or underutilized historic buildings in the traditional downtown area with great potential to contribute to village revitalization.

The Moultonborough Grange project received a grant for a building condition assessment with preservation guidelines from the NH Preservation Alliance in August, with a final report forthcoming from Bedard Preservation & Restoration LLC. This report will recommend rehabilitation strategies, provide cost estimates, and suggest effective phasing for work. The priority was emergency stabilization of the building's failing roof system before winter, work completed in October thanks to private donations and a generous grant from the Bald Peak Community Fund of the NH Charitable Foundation.

In mid-October, the Moultonborough Grange hall was recognized as one of seven community landmarks statewide on the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance's 'Seven to Save' list for 2012. At the announcement event, it was noted that the property needs funding for stabilization and a re-use plan so that it can once again play a key role in the life of the village center. The 'Seven to Save' designation brings great visibility to efforts now underway to fundraise for permanent stabilization work on the Grange building, and to aid in finding potential partners and proposals for the eventual re-use of the property.

Inclusion in the State Register of Historic Places acknowledges a property's significance in the community, designates it as historical (a pre-requisite of many grant programs), and allows it special consideration and relief from some building codes and regulations.